United Nations A/C.4/63/SR.18

General Assembly
Sixty-third session

Official Records

Distr.: General
26 December 2008

Original: English

# Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

**Summary record of the 18th meeting**
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 28 October 2008, at 10 a.m.

*Chairman:* Mr. Argüello ..... (Argentina)
*later:* Mr. Elsherbini (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Egypt)

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08-57236 (E)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.*

**Agenda item 31: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects** (*continued*)

1. **Mr. Urbina** (Costa Rica) observed that the growing number of peacekeeping operations had become far more complex and challenging: they now aimed not only to restore peace and security but also to deal with issues ranging from disarmament to governance and development. That was why Costa Rica advocated integrated missions that, in its view, would be cost-effective and would smooth the transition from conflict to post-conflict reconstruction and development. At the same time, of course, the special representative of the Secretary-General for each mission would have to be given more authority. Mandates should also reflect the available resources and the wishes of the parties involved — otherwise the United Nations would do no more than provide a buffer between two warring parties, maintaining the status quo without resolving the conflict or promoting peace and development.

2. If missions were to succeed, there should also be sustained, timely interaction and exchange of information between the troop-contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat, and that should be done before any decisions were taken. Furthermore, although it was universally agreed that the protection of civilians was a basic goal, there was no clear understanding of what exactly that responsibility entailed, especially in multidimensional operations. The Security Council mandates should clearly specify what was expected.

3. Instances of misconduct by a few peacekeepers were still taking place and as a matter of policy, they could not be tolerated. The Organization was, moreover, being too slow in putting into effect the agreed strategy on assistance and support to the victims of such abuse.

4. **Mr. Natchiappan** (India) welcomed the strengthening and rationalization of peacekeeping structures. It remained essential to ensure clear command structures, coherence in policy and strategy, effective coordination and integration, as well as unity of command from Headquarters to the field. Utmost priority should be given to enhancing the safety and security of field personnel, including through enhanced information gathering and sharing. Troop-contributing countries should be involved early and fully in all aspects of mission planning; consultations on the eve of mandate renewal left little scope for meaningful discussions.

5. India had participated in most major peacekeeping operations in Africa and had supported efforts to enhance African peacekeeping capacity. The real challenge before the United Nations was to strengthen peacekeeping without regionalizing it. The maintenance of international peace and security was the responsibility of the United Nations and cooperation with regional organizations should remain in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

6. India was fully committed to the zero-tolerance policy in respect of sexual exploitation and abuse and would take action to prosecute where appropriate. The Integrated Training Service of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations should put the experience of major troop-contributing countries to good use in training programmes, which were urgently needed.

7. His delegation supported a holistic and coherent approach to security sector reform. There must be improved coordination, avoidance of duplication and a sense of national ownership. As the Police Division expanded to reflect the increased role of police in peacekeeping operations, it was important to ensure that troop-contributing countries were adequately represented in senior management positions.

8. The issue of reimbursement of troop-contributing countries should also be addressed and the selective financing of operations avoided. In response to the Secretary-General's call for increased representation of female personnel in field missions, India was proud to have provided the first fully female formed police unit, deployed for the past two years in Liberia. The unit had proved successful in reaching out to women and children in a post-conflict environment, in addition to performing its normal duties.

9. **Mr. Abdelaziz** (Egypt) observed that the growing number and complexity of peacekeeping operations was reflected in an increase of the peacekeeping budget to around $7 billion a year. Since the Organization's entire regular budget for the biennium was only $4.2 billion, it could not be expected to ensure the timely provision of the troops and equipment needed to maintain international peace and security. The

substantial difference between the two budgets was a matter of concern. It revealed an emphasis on conflict management rather than conflict settlement, which undermined the basic principles of peacekeeping and exhausted a budget that would better serve development objectives. The global financial crisis should, rather, motivate the international community to exploit existing mandates and available resources more advantageously and to concentrate on resolving disputes by peaceful means. He was concerned that any expansion of peacekeeping operations or restructuring should be consistent with the basic principles of peacekeeping and ensure linkages with existing peace agreements and processes. There must also be a peace to keep in the first place, as well as an effective, balanced partnership between international stakeholders, with the consent of governments concerned. Peacekeeping must be part of the solution, not a peace-enforcement operation that led the United Nations into confrontation with States concerned.

10. The growth in number of operations reflected a continued demand for peacekeeping on the part of the international community, as well as its trust in the Organization. However, his delegation wished to highlight the primary role of the General Assembly in formulating and deciding on concepts, policies and budgetary matters relating to peacekeeping. The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations was the only United Nations entity mandated to undertake a comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects.

11. Coordination between the Security Council and troop-contributing countries must be strengthened to ensure that their expertise was utilized whenever new operations were established or their enlargement, reduction or termination considered. Effective consultations were also needed between troop contributors, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support. Unity of command must also be ensured, as must coherence of strategies between the two Departments. The safety and security of United Nations personnel was best achieved with a well-planned mission deployed on the basis of a comprehensive political process.

12. It was also vital to ensure transparency with respect to procurement contracts; give priority to regional and national companies; and avoid sole source contracts with large companies that led to logistical complications.

13. His delegation supported the zero-tolerance policy on acts of sexual exploitation and abuse, which must be implemented in a transparent manner by the Secretariat and in consultation with the governments concerned. A culture of peacekeeping should also be disseminated and regular meetings held at the expert level to discuss the evolution in peacekeeping concepts and practices on the ground.

14. United Nations efforts to strengthen African peacekeeping capabilities and consolidate regional efforts to that end were welcome. However, regional operations must not substitute the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, which rested with the United Nations. Egypt was concerned by the Secretariat's signing of a cooperation agreement with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), in view of the military nature of NATO and different interpretations regarding its categorization under Chapter VIII of the Charter. The Security Council's indirect authorization to such entities to carry out tasks falling within the Organization's competence was also a matter of concern. Both had been undertaken without prior consultation of Member States.

15. **Mr. Al-Otmi** (Yemen) said that, in keeping with its belief that peacekeeping was a collective responsibility, his country had contributed elements to 10 peacekeeping operations. He called on the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to allow more countries to participate in its operations in order to ensure equitable geographical representation.

16. Peacekeeping was not a permanent solution to conflicts and not a substitute for addressing their root causes. Least developed countries required technical and economic assistance in order to lift them out of poverty and repair their tattered social fabric. In that connection, the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund were important steps in the reform of the United Nations and required the support of the entire international community.

17. While preventive diplomacy was vital to conflict resolution, the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States must also be respected. The global food, energy and financial crises, as well as climate change, posed grave threats to international peace and security and required urgent action.

18. He strongly condemned attacks on, and the killing of, United Nations personnel and called for increased protection for peacekeepers. He also supported the Organization's zero-tolerance policy in respect of sexual exploitation and abuse and stressed that all allegations of such misconduct should be investigated.

19. **Mr. Ayi-Bonte** (Ghana) said that, contrary to expectations following the end of the Cold War, demand for United Nations peacekeeping operations had surged, stretching the Organization's capacities to the limits. The United Nations had not been daunted, resulting in the global recognition that it remained the only supranational organization with the capability to deploy, lead and sustain multidimensional peacekeeping operations. With no shortage of threats to global peace, demand for United Nations peacekeeping would continue to rise. The Organization's capabilities must thus be periodically reviewed in order to improve its preparedness and effectiveness, in the interests of ensuring peace and security for civilians and peacekeepers alike.

20. The reform process undertaken by the Secretariat was most welcome and should be continued; however, it was not an end in itself or a panacea for emerging frictions in peacekeeping operations. The ability of the United Nations to fulfil peacekeeping objectives depended also on the provision of realistic, viable and clearly defined mandates and adequate logistical support, as well as the timely deployment of peacekeepers, inter alia.

21. Although mission fatalities had declined over the years, the recent tragic incident in Darfur had renewed Ghana's concerns over the security and safety of peacekeepers. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations should be commended for its efforts to address security gaps at missions and be encouraged to explore new options.

22. Given the current strain on United Nations peacekeeping, cooperation with regional arrangements was vital; however, the Department should consider establishing frameworks to replace existing ad hoc cooperation arrangements with such entities. Efforts to strengthen African peacekeeping capabilities were welcome; the international community should provide the requisite assistance to strengthen rapid deployment capabilities in that connection. Current gaps in the Police Division must also be addressed. Appropriate measures should also be taken to further full implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

23. *Mr. Elsherbini (Egypt), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

24. **Mr. Nhleko** (Swaziland) observed that there was no single model for multidimensional peacekeeping operations and that each mission should take into account the needs and dynamics of the country concerned. His delegation paid tribute to the professionalism, dedication and courage of United Nations peacekeepers, particularly those who had given their lives for the maintenance of peace and security.

25. In the interests of strengthening African peacekeeping, logistical and financial support should be provided for the rapid deployment capabilities of the African Union and the Joint Action Plan agreed between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the African Union should focus on cooperation in conflict prevention as well as peacekeeping and in particular on development of the African Standby Force, to which his Government had already contributed a battalion. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support should devise programmes that would further the overall objectives of the African Standby Force and at the same time contribute to sustainable development in African developing countries. The Department should continue to help the African Union to develop common procedures in its joint planning and coordination with subregional communities.

26. The United Nations should continue to follow a policy of zero tolerance with respect to sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations peacekeepers, so as to eliminate all such misconduct. His delegation welcomed the adoption in resolution 62/214 of a comprehensive strategy on assistance and support to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse.

27. **Mr. Zongo** (Burkina Faso) observed that the essential mission of peacekeeping operations was to protect civilians living in the midst of conflict. The United Nations principles of respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity were particularly relevant during the planning phases of peacekeeping operations; and the memorandums of agreement should also take into account the views of the host countries and the troop-contributing countries. More clearly defined

command structures and predictable funding would certainly make for a more efficient response to requests for peacekeeping. The United Nations must enter into partnerships with regional and subregional organizations, which had a better knowledge of the socio-political and cultural conditions in their areas.

28. The nature of conflicts had evolved to the point that most now were internal disputes, and consequently peacekeeping operations should plan their interventions in cooperation with regional and subregional organizations. The experience and specialized knowledge of troop-contributing countries could also be particularly useful. When taking a carefully planned preventive approach, the United Nations should examine the root causes of the crisis in question, which included poverty, bad governance, injustice or inequality. That was particularly true for Africa, unfortunately the scene of many crises. It was therefore important to support the African Union as it sought to resolve the conflicts on the continent, particularly by providing it with financial resources. Also, since there were many countries that would want to take part in a costly peacekeeping operation like the one in Darfur but lacked the necessary means, the United Nations should establish links of solidarity that would allow a greater participation by less wealthy States. Burkina Faso, which had taken part in peacekeeping operations since 1993, was intending despite its modest means to join the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

29. In its peacekeeping work, the Organization must present a more positive and honourable image and the Secretary-General and all parties concerned must maintain the zero-tolerance policy for any misconduct by peacekeepers. In the interests, again, of credibility, the Organization must provide security and protection to civilians in all countries without exception, and approach all crises with the same determination and commitment. The Somali people had been waiting too long for action on the part of the United Nations and needed reassurance in that regard.

30. The security and safety of peacekeepers working with such dedication under extremely difficult situations and often even sacrificing their lives, must be ensured. Also, the operational capacity of the peacekeepers in the field was crucial, and the Secretary-General must raise the standards of the training programmes provided and help to organize local training centres such as those in Ghana and in Mali.

31. **Ms. Kamto** (Cameroon) said that there were certain guiding principles underlying the success of peacekeeping operations. First among them were respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of States, non-interference in their domestic affairs, and close cooperation between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the troop-contributing countries. Secondly, since the aim was to consolidate peace and prevent the resumption of hostilities, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants was an essential component of any peacekeeping operation. Thirdly, the costs of peacekeeping operations were a particular burden for the developing countries, and therefore it was extremely important for them to be reimbursed quickly for any troop-contributing expenses.

32. The broader and more complex missions that were now the norm obviously created the need for a new training strategy and more extensive training of peacekeeping personnel, now to be provided by the Integrated Training Service established at the United Nations Logistics Base. Cameroon itself, aware of how crucial proper training was, and wanting to diversify its contribution to peacekeeping and strengthen its cooperation with the United Nations and the African Union, had set up the International School for Security Forces, which — with the invaluable aid of bilateral and multilateral partners — had expanded from a training school for Cameroonian peacekeeping contingents to a regional centre for training police contingents from other African States in the subregion, thus improving the peacekeeping capabilities of any such State wishing to have its forces attend the School.

33. Cameroon was closely following the functioning of the newly restructured Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the new Department of Field Support, as they worked as closely as possible together to apply the six key principles of the restructuring programme, namely, ensuring unity of command, giving priority to field missions, clearly defining reporting and communication obligations, avoiding unnecessarily complicated restructuring, integrating their efforts and ensuring consistent strategies and policies. Cameroon looked forward to the comprehensive report to be issued by the Secretary-General on the restructuring programme.

34. Her country had over the years actively participated in peacekeeping operations in Cambodia, Kosovo, Haiti, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Darfur and the Central African Republic. Most recently, Cameroon had begun working with the European-led peacekeeping force (EUFOR) on the border between Chad, the Central African Republic and the Sudan, by allowing Cameroonian territory to be used as a transit area for the mission's materiel and personnel.

35. *Mr. Argüello (Argentina) resumed the Chair.*

36. **Mr. Kebret** (Ethiopia) observed that peacekeeping operations were venturing into uncharted territory that presented the United Nations with sensitive, dangerous and complex challenges with which it had not yet fully dealt. The ongoing reform of the machinery of peacekeeping, accordingly, needed to be vigorously pursued in order to ensure more focused, professional and sustainable operations.

37. Peacekeepers faced risks on a daily basis, and deserve the highest tribute for serving with dedication under harsh conditions. In recent years attacks on them had started to become routine, and Ethiopia condemned such senseless and savage attacks in the strongest possible terms. The safety of the peacekeepers was inseparable from the achievement of the objectives of peacekeeping. The United Nations must give priority to devising a way of creating a safe working environment for its peacekeepers.

38. One of the areas where peacekeepers were under constant attack was Somalia, and the operations of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) were severely hampered by terrorist forces seeking to prevent political reconciliation and stability in the country. The anguish of the people of Somalia, by any fair standard, was no less than that of other peoples in similar situations, yet the international community's uneven response to the situation in Somalia was baffling. It was high time that the United Nations provided logistical and other support for the valiant Ugandan and Burundian peacekeepers in AMISOM; consideration should also be given to transforming that mission into a United Nations peacekeeping mission. Africa expected swift, concerted action on Somalia. In such a desperate situation, the United Nations must not wait until the traditional conditions for the deployment of a peacekeeping mission existed; it must act before it was too late to bring under control a crisis that could seriously destabilize the subregion and the entire region.

39. The African Union's peacekeeping strategy placed primary responsibility on African governments and their people, while working in partnership with the United Nations and other international organizations. The Organization's support was vital to building the peacekeeping capacities of African regional organizations and the African Union, in order to make the continent an effective partner in global peacemaking efforts.

40. Ethiopia itself had participated actively in United Nations peacekeeping operations for over half a century, as part of its responsibility as a founding member of the United Nations. Its troops, military observers and civilians were currently serving in Liberia and Darfur.

41. **Mr. Leong** (Malaysia) said that despite the increasingly multidimensional character of United Nations peacekeeping operations, they should remain consistent with their mandates and with relevant agreed principles and guidelines. However, the Organization's ability to fulfil its responsibilities in the area of peacekeeping was only as good as the commitment of Member States, which must provide unwavering support, especially in the area of human and financial resources and logistics to ensure the timely and successful implementation of peacekeeping operations.

42. Malaysia had participated in more than 20 peacekeeping missions since 1960, and was currently contributing a total of 483 military and 269 police personnel in eight missions. Referring to the restructuring of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, he said that the Department must continue to create and refine synergies within the United Nations system; provide information on mission developments to troop-contributing countries on a priority basis, especially those whose personnel were involved on the ground; preserve and ensure unity of command at all levels; and ensure geographical balance in personnel and troop contributions while maintaining high personnel quality.

43. His delegation shared the concern of the Secretary-General regarding cases of sexual misconduct by peacekeepers, and was committed to the zero-tolerance policy in respect of sexual exploitation and abuse; those responsible for such misconduct must be subject to disciplinary or criminal action. Personnel

selected for peacekeeping missions must be reliable, so as not to tarnish the reputation of United Nations peacekeeping operations. Malaysia would work with other Member States to ensure the implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee in that regard. However, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations must provide fuller and more timely information on incidents involving peacekeepers.

44. Noting the 93 fatalities to date among peacekeepers in 2008, he expressed concern at the increasing threat to United Nations peacekeeping personnel serving in conflict areas and vigorously condemned all acts of violence against them. Indeed, the perpetrators of such acts must be held accountable and the Department should also carry out a thorough investigation into the attacks in order to foster better preparedness and reduce casualties.

45. **Mr. Hosseini** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that all peacekeeping operations must be carried out with the authorization of the United Nations and under its leadership, command and control. Impartiality, the consent of the parties concerned, and the non-use of force except in self-defence should serve as the guiding principles of United Nations peacekeeping operations. Unilateral acts taken outside the purview of the United Nations were not consistent with international law and the Charter of the United Nations, and must not only be ended but prevented from recurring in the future. In addition to strictly observing the aforementioned principles, however, United Nations peacekeeping operations should also enjoy the full political support of the Member States, precisely assess human, financial and logistical resources and have clearly defined and achievable mandates and exit strategies.

46. While any new concepts and ideas developed to address the increasingly complex and multidimensional nature of peacekeeping operations should be consistent with the principles, guidelines and terminology agreed upon during the relevant intergovernmental negotiating processes, the General Assembly remained the organ with primary responsibility for reviewing the political, legal and financial impact of such concepts and ideas.

47. The United Nations should adopt a zero-tolerance policy with respect to any misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse, by all United Nations personnel; no perpetrator of such misconduct should enjoy impunity, although due process must be followed in any relevant investigations. Security sector reform must be integrated into the framework of United Nations rule of law activities and the development of a United Nations approach to such reform must take place within the General Assembly; the formulation of reform strategies should be carried out through the intergovernmental process.

48. The contribution of regional arrangements as provided for under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations should not absolve the United Nations of its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security; the Secretariat should ensure that troop-contributing countries were properly represented in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support at all levels at Headquarters and in the field.

49. **Mr. Sim** Tiong Kian (Singapore) said that in view of the uphill struggle faced by United Nations peacekeeping, he welcomed the stated intention of the two Under-Secretaries-General to stay the course on the reform agenda. The organizational restructuring undertaken so far had been a good start, but its objectives were yet to be fulfilled. His delegation therefore looked forward to the Secretary-General's review of that exercise. It would like to know whether the integrated operational teams concept was working; whether the Department of Peacekeeping Operations' crisis monitoring, analysis and response capabilities had improved; and whether the benefits of the restructuring outweighed the costs in the form of additional resources needed to maintain unity of command as well as increased bureaucratic delays.

50. With regard to resources, he urged the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to continue working with the Department of Political Affairs and the Peacebuilding Support Office to reduce the demands of existing missions where possible, and called on developed countries to contribute more peacekeepers or equipment.

51. He expressed his delegation's deep concern regarding the recruitment and retention difficulties being encountered by the Department of Field Support. While applauding that Department's efforts to improve the situation, he urged it to review the management system at Headquarters with a view to promoting good performers and replacing ineffectual ones while maintaining equal geographic representation. The Department could also consider a policy for

periodically rotating personnel between Headquarters and the field.

52. Given the crucial need for clear doctrines and guidelines, he welcomed the publication of the Capstone doctrine, and called for its translation by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations into useful guidelines and training modules, the absence of which in the past had led to confusion and tragic consequences in the field. Guidelines for the protection of the civilians should also be developed. He was disappointed to note, however, that recent meetings of the Special Committee had been marred by acrimony and the politicization of issues, a trend that risked undermining the relevance of the Special Committee.

53. Finally, as peacekeepers increasingly worked alongside civilian and humanitarian partners in the field, the rising trend of malicious and indiscriminate attacks against them by criminals and illegal armed elements was a growing concern. Such attacks stemmed in part from the public perception, according to the June 2008 report of the Independent Panel on Safety and Security of United Nations Personnel and Premises Worldwide, that the United Nations was not impartial and neutral. The report of the Independent Panel on Accountability related to the attack on the United Nations premises in Algiers in December 2007 had also indicated troubling failures in the administration of peacekeeping at the United Nations, including lack of supervision by senior managers, a dysfunctional relationship among key actors in the field, and shortcomings in recruitment and training. He urged the Department of Field Support to take appropriate measures to enhance the safety and security of peacekeepers and called on the Secretary-General to ensure accountability at all levels.

54. **Mr. Butagira** (Uganda) said that, while steady progress had been achieved over the past year in restructuring the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support, there was a need to ensure full compliance with General Assembly resolution 61/270 with regard to the personnel recruitment process, while bearing in mind the principles of transparency, equity and regional balance. Expressing his delegation's strong condemnation of recent continuing and frequently lethal attacks on United Nations peacekeepers, he requested the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support to work closely with the countries concerned to ensure the security of personnel in the field, promptly investigate the causes of incidents that occurred and inform the affected troop-contributing countries with a view to facilitating compensation wherever applicable. He called on the United Nations to expedite the deployment of peacekeepers to replace AMISOM.

55. **Ms. Harris** (Côte d'Ivoire) said that since the signing of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement on 4 March 2007, the social and political situation in her country had been returning to normal: hostilities between the warring forces had ended; the Zone of Confidence had been dismantled; and the freedom of movement of people and goods throughout the country had been restored. Recent Government-supported measures in the area of demobilization and reintegration of combatants had also been successful, and had culminated in the recognition by the Security Council that her country had put an end to the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict. She expressed her Government's gratitude to the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), the donor and troop-contributing countries, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), France, the international community, and all those who had directly or indirectly contributed to the peace process and the implementation of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement.

56. **Mr. del Rosario Ceballos** (Dominican Republic) welcomed the contribution of United Nations peacekeeping operations to the maintenance of international peace and security, and expressed confidence in the ability of peacekeeping personnel to face emerging challenges. However, the increase in the number and complexity of peacekeeping operations in recent years attested to the fact that not enough attention was being paid to conflict prevention and to the promotion of sustainable development; greater efforts should be made to prevent conflicts in order to reduce the number of peacekeeping missions.

57. He welcomed the recent extension of the mandate of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), one of the most concrete expressions of international assistance to Haiti. Securing the assistance promised to Haiti by donors had been a historically difficult endeavour, as evidenced by the recent High-Level Conference on World Food Security, which had yielded a mere $10 million — amounting to $1 per person — in emergency aid for the sister republic. The international donor community should

honour its pledges of assistance, so as to strengthen the role of MINUSTAH.

58. **Mr. Al-Mekrad** (Kuwait) said that there was a need to clearly define the objectives of peacekeeping forces in the context of humanitarian operations. Cooperation and consultation between troop-contributing countries and the Security Council throughout all phases of peacekeeping operations were also imperative, as was the provision of technical and financial support to peacekeeping forces. Moreover, the United Nations should play a more active role in conflict prevention.

59. He welcomed the support and cooperation that Member States had provided to the Organization as it sought to strengthen its peacekeeping capacities. His Government commended the United Nations for its role in maintaining boundary markers between Kuwait and Iraq, pursuant to Security Council resolution 833 (1993), and also welcomed Iraqi cooperation in that regard. Kuwait had implemented all the recommendations contained in the technical report by removing all obstacles and creating conditions conducive to the work of United Nations technical teams.

60. Although Kuwait's share of the peacekeeping budget had increased fivefold in recent years, it had continued to meet its obligations completely and in a timely fashion and hoped that all Member States would do likewise. He strongly condemned actions that threatened United Nations peacekeeping personnel and called for all possible measures to be taken to ensure their safety.

61. **Mr. Seakamela** (South Africa) said that his Government was currently contributing troops to United Nations peacekeeping operations on the African continent and elsewhere. In light of the unusually high demand for United Nations peacekeepers, who were called upon to serve in increasingly volatile and insecure environments, he welcomed the steps being taken by the Organization to accord the highest priority to the safety of its personnel in the field.

62. South Africa attached great importance to security sector reform as an instrument for building sustainable peace, security, democracy and development; such reform should be nationally owned and should address local realities. He encouraged the United Nations to continue developing a common approach in that regard.

63. In keeping with his Government's commitment to gender equality, he stressed the need for increased female participation in peacekeeping operations. He commended the Secretary-General's commitment to increase the number of women in leadership positions, and urged him to move rapidly towards meeting the target of female representation in peacekeeping.

64. He welcomed the Secretariat's support for the strengthening of African peacekeeping operations, especially those efforts aimed at developing and strengthening the African Union's capacity to develop a Joint Action Plan to address specific constraints identified by African Member States. He emphasized the need for closer cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, since such organizations were usually in a better position to intervene and had a better understanding of specific conflicts due to their proximity. For instance, initial African Union involvement had paved the way for deployment of United Nations peacekeeping forces in Burundi and in the Darfur region of the Sudan.

65. He welcomed the Organization's efforts to implement disciplinary procedures intended to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation by United Nations personnel. He also urged the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support to continue their efforts to address the current imbalance in geographic and gender representation among peacekeeping personnel in accordance with the Charter, Staff Regulations and Rules and relevant General Assembly resolutions. Such representation should also take into account the contributions by Member States.

66. **Mr. Kulima** (Zambia) said that his delegation condemned all acts of violence aimed at United Nations peacekeepers and called on the Organization to develop a robust policy to protect all categories of personnel. His Government was prepared to work with all concerned parties to ensure that any acts of misconduct, especially sexual exploitation and abuse, were rooted out of United Nations peacekeeping activities and duly punished. Such misconduct by peacekeeping personnel was unacceptable and had a detrimental effect on the fulfilment of mandates, tarnishing the image of troop-contributing countries and that of the Organization as a whole and eclipsing the positive contributions of United Nations peacekeeping.

67. As a troop- and police-contributing country, Zambia was concerned over the numerous delays in processing of death and disability claims it had submitted to the United Nations — a concern echoed in General Assembly resolution 61/276 — and called upon the Secretariat to simplify claims procedures so as to enable their prompt settlement.

68. **Mr. Nyowani** (Zimbabwe) said that the United Nations-African Union Joint Action Plan was vital to African peacekeeping capacities, and called for support for African efforts to establish a standby force capable of rapidly responding to and preventing conflict. Cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations should also be reinforced. Furthermore, troop-contributing countries should be fully involved in all stages of United Nations peacekeeping operations. More frequent and substantive interaction among those countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat would also contribute to a more inclusive decision-making process.

69. While his Government had endorsed the Secretary-General's proposal to restructure the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, it was of the view that the Department must take into account the interests of all parties, including respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity and the promotion of national ownership.

70. Urgent consideration must be given to the issue of safety of peacekeeping personnel in light of the disturbing trend of deaths of peacekeepers in the line of duty. His delegation fully supported the zero-tolerance policy in respect of sexual exploitation and abuse, and called upon all troop- and police-contributing countries to take all necessary measures to eliminate those shameful acts of misconduct. Although progress had been made on the issue of female representation within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and in the field, more remained to be done.

71. Noting his country's long-standing contribution of troops and observers to United Nations peacekeeping operations, he expressed concern over the lack of transparency in the processing of compensation for officers and peacekeepers who perished while serving the United Nations.

72. **Ms. Ithete** (Namibia), noting that sustainable development could not be achieved without peace and stability, said that containing conflicts and instability had, to some extent, played a role in the underdevelopment of many countries, especially in Africa.

73. As a result of the increase in the number of conflicts, peacekeeping operations had become too expensive and complex to manage. While conflict resolution was important, the international community should place greater emphasis on conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts. In that connection, she urged the United Nations to continue to assist the African Union in enhancing its early warning capability, so as to enable it to maintain peace on the continent.

74. Having itself benefited from multilateral international efforts to maintain peace and security, Namibia had contributed troops and police to various United Nations and African Union peacekeeping operations. It had recently pledged a mechanized infantry battalion of 860 troops for UNAMID, along with individual police officers and military observers for the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS).

75. She reiterated her delegation's commitment to the zero-tolerance policy on all forms of misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse, committed by peacekeeping personnel; such misconduct constituted a betrayal of the very people United Nations peacekeeping operations were intended to protect. The importance of women's participation in peacekeeping operations lay not only in the need for gender balance but also in the unique contribution that women could make to the success of peacekeeping operations.

76. Peacekeeping operations must be conducted strictly in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. It was also important to improve cooperation among troop-contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretariat, in the interest of a more inclusive decision-making process. The principle of equitable geographical distribution should be observed in recruiting personnel at Headquarters and in the field; the selection process for high-level posts should also be more transparent.

77. **Mr. Gallardo** (Peru), referring to Peru's long-standing participation in peacekeeping operations, said that such operations should be crafted in such a way as to allow ownership by the country concerned, whose institutions, capacity for conflict resolution and sovereignty should be strengthened. Given the growing role of regional and other international organizations in peacekeeping, a flexible, case-by-case approach to

operations would be required, without prejudice to the principles set forth in the Charter.

78. Since peace and security, development and human rights were interrelated, peacekeeping operations would have to address not just the immediate causes of conflict but also work towards creating conditions for sustainable peace. A more comprehensive approach which took all relevant criteria into account would prevent hasty troop reductions and withdrawals and lead to a more effective United Nations response. Indeed, Security Council resolution 1840 (2008), which renewed the mandate of MINUSTAH had affirmed the need for such a comprehensive approach. He reiterated his Government's support for Haiti through its participation in MINUSTAH; indeed, Peru and Argentina were working on plans to deploy a joint company of army engineers to Haiti.

79. In order for United Nations peacekeeping operations to be able to credibly fulfil their mandates, a shared political and strategic perception of the situation on the ground among the main actors would be necessary, along with forces with well-defined mandates placed at the Organization's disposal without any prior conditions. As far as the strengthening of operational capacity was concerned, it was essential, inter alia, to ensure a clear chain of command, effective planning and management, and security and safety of field personnel. Furthermore, strict discipline within peacekeeping operations was key, as was the need to ensure that troop-contributing countries duly punished any personnel involved in any misconduct, including sexual abuse and exploitation. Finally, he reiterated his Government's interest in working with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on its international capacity-building and training activities.

*The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.*